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Gilmer, John H.
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WAR OF RACES.

BY WHOM IT IS SOUGHT TO BE BROUGHT ABOUT.

CONSIDERED IN

TWO LETTERS,

WITH COPIOUS EXTRACTS FROM THE RECENT WORK
OF HILTON R. HELPER,

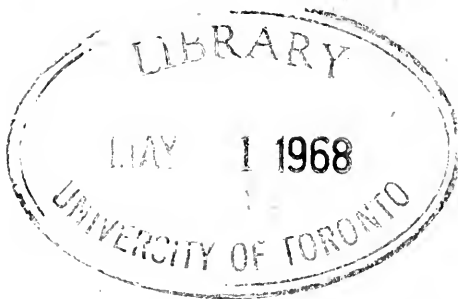
BY

JOHN H. GILMER.

LET EVERY MAN "READ, LEARN AND INWARDLY DIGEST,"

RICHMOND:
July 29th, 1867.

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THE ALBEMARLE MEETING.

LETTER FROM JOHN H. GILMER, ESQ.

To Messrs. Thos. Wood, John J. Boccock, W. T. Early and others, forming the Committee to Report Resolutions, &c., to the Albemarle Meeting held 1st day of July.

RICHMOND, July 4th, 1867.

Gentlemen—I have read and deliberately considered the resolutions and action of the meeting of the citizens of Albemarle on the first instant, in which you bore so conspicuous a part. This morning (the day has sacred associations—in the past—but sad and gloomy suggestions at this time) I again read them. Knowing you personally as well as I do—feeling a deep and abiding solicitude in everything which emanates from my native county, and not unmindful of the great importance justly attached to the public acts and private convictions of the distinguished gentlemen whose countenance and presence add great weight to all that was done, or was proposed to be done, I cannot resist the conviction that it may do some good generally, over the State at least, if I, this day, calmly review your action, and respectfully invoke your own review of that action. Each of you know me well, and has known me from our early youth. In times gone by—better days and happier associations—we were accustomed, on the rostrum, in the forum and around the festive board, to interchange views on great questions of public policy, as well as grave issues of constitutional limitations on executive and legislative powers. Twenty years absence from “Old Albemarle” has, in nothing, abated my ardent attachment to her people, nor weakened my devotion to her best interests. In her sacred soil repose the dust of my revered ancestry.

I am sure each of you will, on a moment's reflection, attribute what I now propose to address you, and through you, the people of Virginia, to none other than patriotic and honorable motives. Strife and contention are not my purpose. Reason and judgment are my guides; peace, harmony, justice, a permanent and rational restoration of the Union my object. I yield to no man, in an abiding, sincere desire to witness a thorough restoration of the Union, and a speedy realization of all the blessings of a Catholic reunion of the hearts and common interests of the American States and people. But can such a result be accomplished but by a reunion *on principle and for principle*? Think of this. No one

individual—where his social and political relations bring him in contact with other men—can ever succeed, unless his actions, motives and relations are regulated, in all respects, by those cardinal rules, by which the social and political compact are uniformly sustained, regulated and restrained. *Principle* is the cornerstone of all human action—if it is a well regulated and honorable action. Passion, prejudice, selfish propensities, avaricious incentives, ambitious schemes, and indeed all the mere *emotions* of man, when isolated from the great moving power which keeps the social and political compact in a healthful and normal state, are to the body politic precisely what *disease* is to the body.

It is a fact too apparent to be overlooked, that the people of America, as well as the political structure of the Federal and State Governments, are now in a diseased condition. Passion and prejudice, selfish propensities and avaricious incentives, ambitious schemes and party frenzy, have all conspired to madden public men, and alienate the people from each other. As a people, we are in an abnormal state. Both the Federal and State governments are strangely turning from the regulated channel, prescribed by the organic law, without which they are mere organized popular institutions, to be used by bad, vicious and ambitious men, for the most sinister purposes. The Federal government, the representative of the Union, is at issue with itself. It is at war with its own members. It is an unwieldy, heterodox mass of discordant and self-destroying elements, feeding on its own passions, and consuming the vitals of the system on which it rests as a foundation. It is assuming and exercising powers, which, if not restrained, must, in the inevitable friction of its own machinery, soon ignite the entire structure, from the increasing heat of unrestrained passion. It assumes to speak in the name and by the authority of the *United States*, while it is madly crushing those very States, *on the union of which its own existence depends*. It professes to rule in the name and by the authority of the *people*, while it madly repudiates and laughs to scorn THE MAJESTY OF THE PEOPLE. This is no exaggeration. No one who loves *truth* more than he does place and power, and fears God more than he does man, will deny this.

It is at such a period, so fraught with danger, so full of strife, so pregnant with the increasing elements of moral decadence, social disquietude and governmental derangement, that the people of *Albemarle* come forth to counsel with the people of the State. An important epoch! A fearful crisis! A portentous issue! Were

we to look back upon the past, commune with her great and illustrious dead, recall their acts, and seek inspiration from their deeds, what would be the response? Their sacred dust mingles with the earth on which you are now acting. Their spirits still, I would fain hope, linger around the abodes of their descendants. What would the Jeffersons, the Randolphs, the Carys, the Southalls, the Gordons, the Bocoeks, the Gilmers, of former years, think and say and do, were they now present to guide, instruct, inspire and act with you? Stand over their graves, recall their words, invoke their spirits!

Now, my friends, allow me in the candor of friendship, and in the name of our brave, patriotic, fearless predecessors, briefly to review *your* resolutions and actions. Friendship is an idle profession where there is no candor. Truth can never be attained without unprejudiced and searching investigation.

Your first resolution is as follows :

Resolved, That having consented in good faith to the reconstruction of the Southern States under the Sherman-Shellabarger bill, we consider ourselves as bound in honor to the unconditional maintenance of the Union of these States, and that we regard the welfare of Virginia and of the other Southern States as requiring that our people should co-operate with the party that will give us protection for life and property, and believing that the Republican party of the United States alone has the power to give us such protection, we desire to co-operate with them.

Allow me to ask you, and each of you, what do you mean when you use the words "*as bound in honor to the unconditional maintenance of the Union of these States?*" Let us review these significant words—not hypercritically, but in a sound catholic application of the terms used as applied to the objects had in view. What does the word "*unconditional*" imply? Webster gives the following definition: "Absolute, unreserved; not limited by any conditions. *We are required to make unconditional surrender of ourselves to our Maker. The king demanded an unconditional submission.*"

"Oh! pass not, Lord, an absolute decree
Or bind thy sentence unconditional."

Did you mean or design to convey this idea, as expressed by Webster? If not, then what did you mean? Surely you could not have designed to impress upon the people of the State the idea that right or wrong, just or unjust, with principle or without principle, your "honor" pledged you to a deliberate, forgone, slavish surrender of your *manhood*. That on bended knee and with bated breath, you invited the shackles of pure serfdom to be riveted

around your *wills and consciences*, wherewith to fetter and enslave the very *souls* of your offspring. And yet, taken in a grammatical sense, as above shown, such an inference might be drawn. In a political sense, you distinctly avow the *motive* by which you were actuated, and the object at which you aimed, for you say "that we regard the welfare of Virginia and of the other Southern States as requiring that our people should *co-operate with the party that WILL GIVE US PROTECTION for life and property, and believing that the Republican party of the United States alone HAS THE POWER to give us protection, we desire to co-operate with them.*"

It is then, not for principle, or conviction of right, or a high and noble sense of duty, to yourselves, your country and your God, that you make this avowal of your political creed. The constitutional guarantees are deliberately ignored. The voice of reason is silenced; the convictions of judgment hushed; the muttering of conscience suppressed; the whole man merged in the puerile sentiment of fear. All that is dear in life, and honored after death, merged in the desire for "*protection of life and property!*" Men of *Albemarle*, reconsider this resolution. Retrace your steps!

Allow me to furnish you a few practical demonstrations of the utter fallacy of your avowed purposes, and the absolute fatuity of your resolutions. You avow "an *unconditional* maintenance of the Union of these States." Now, suppose that *one* of the conditions precedent to your being restored to the Union should be, (and stranger things have happened) that you should, every man of you, surrender nine-tenths of your land to the freedmen, and legalize marriage between the whites and blacks? Are you prepared for this? And yet you have already signed the bond to such a covenant, and only await explicit orders from "the Republican party" to execute the contract. Suppose that the Republican party should become a repudiation party, a monarchical party, an absolutism party, a woman rights party,—are you prepared in advance to adopt one or all of these dogmas? Mr. Wade, President of the United States Senate, has already doffed his pantaloons and flaunts the petticoat flag as a precious emblem of his specific unionism. Are you prepared for this feminine badge of loyalty? It would so seem from the language and tenor of your resolutions.

Again, suppose "the Republican party of the United States" were to decree (and all they have to do is to resolve and the law is made a decree over the Constitution, the President and the Supreme Court) that *slavery* should be again reinstated and freedmen all returned to bondage? Are you prepared to yield an *uncondi-*

tional adhesion to such a decree? and if so, will you call another convention and ask "the colored people to participate with you?" Have you read the recent work of that inhuman—worse than barbarian—Helper, upon the state, condition and ultimate destiny of *negro*, as he calls "the colored man?" If not, procure a copy, and let your colored friends read or hear it read. For diabolical fury, inhuman cruelty, fiendish bloodthirstiness *against the colored people of the United States*, it has no parallel. And yet this man, of low instincts—vulgar hatred of the colored man—thus avowing the policy of the utter extinction of the negro, *has been and is a burning light in the "Republican party of the United States."* Previous to the war he was endorsed and lionised by W. H. Seward, Secretary of State; E. M. Stanton, Secretary of War, and indeed all of the leading minds of the "Republican party of the United States." Are you prepared to take this man and his policy as your leader and friend?

Allow me to recall one other feature of this most remarkable resolution. You co-operate with the Republican party simply because it "alone has the power to give us such protection." I grant it has the *power*, but when, or how, or where, has it manifested the *will* to do so? What guarantee have you of the fair and just exercise of such power? I can recall no one instance of such a will, purpose or design. It is true there are men and statesmen in that party, who deserve well of the country, who merit your confidence, and are in every way worthy to be followed, supported, cherished and promoted; while there are others who, like their co-operator, Helper, are the very imps of Satan, and will never rest satisfied till they *crush out the freedman, enslave the white man, and utterly revolutionize and destroy our system of government.* Which of this class of men do you propose to "co-operate with?" In the ensuing Presidential election (if your supplications are heard, "your life and property protected," and Virginia handed over a mere vassal of "The Republican party of the United States,") which wing of this party do you propose to join? Will you support General Grant for President, with Mr. Wilson, of Massachusetts for Vice President, on one ticket; or Mr. Chase for the first office, and Mr. Wade (of petticoat memory) for the second office? If you support Grant and Wilson you will be disloyal to Chase and Wade; and then they and their party will refuse to "protect your lives and property." What a dilemma!

Now, my friends, with the freedom of old acquaintance, I have considered your unfortunate resolutions. There is, however, one

other subject to which I wish to direct your consideration. "Life and property" are dear to us all. But personal honor, true manhood and disinterested devotion to country, are much higher and nobler incentives to action. Without honor what is life, without freedom, what is property. When I speak of *honor*, I do not mean that false sentiment of affected manhood displayed by the duelist or the mere man of the world; but rather, that inward conviction of truth, candor, justice, charity, virtue and wisdom which springs from the resolute will of a true man, who had rather die than sacrifice established principles or his country to unlicensed power. When I speak of freedom, I do not mean that licentious exercise of unrestrained will which denotes the savage and characterizes the political and partizan zealot, but rather that well-ascertained, accurately defined right of action which springs from a settled government, based on right and administered in justice, which restrains the governed and the governing power alike, which, under written laws, defines each man's ascertained rights, and sanctions full and complete remedies when those rights are violated, which is as powerful to restrain and punish as it is equal and just in the exercise of its powers.

No such government now exists for us on the American continent. The rights of the people sleep in abeyance, delegated powers have been perverted, and the majesty of the American people has been wrested from its true basis, the constitution, and is now made to play the pimp to representatives, to whom it has been temporarily confided. This must be corrected; and the only way to arrive at a safe and sure solution, is for us, situated as we are, to remain obedient to all laws, observant of all orders, just, generous and liberal to the colored man, according him every right under the law, seeking to instruct him in the duties of the good citizen, rather than making a partizan of him; to wait patiently for the sober second thought of the American people, while we sedulously exercise our right of suffrage in voting for the very best men to fill such offices as we are called upon to fill. In a word, so to act on *principle* as that no party can justly complain of us, and to eschew all party bias, to discard all party prejudice, to meet each issue, as it arises, as men and patriots, devoted to a constitutional Union, and above all unmanly surrender of our convictions of duty to any power, party or conclave. Let us be the last of Virginia freemen rather than the first of Virginia slaves!

In haste, very truly, your friend,

JOHN H. GILMER.

TO THE PEOPLE OF VIRGINIA:

Since the publication of the preceding letter in the Richmond Enquirer, two communications have been published in the *Richmond Whig*, which require special consideration, not only from the relative position of the respective writers, but also from the unfortunate issues, which were, singularly enough, presented in each and both of those communications; one of which was from the pen of F. H. Peirpoint, Esq., addressed to the People of Virginia; the other from the pen of J. M. Botts, Esq., addressed to the "colored People of Culpepper county."

In the letter of Mr. Peirpoint, it is, stated as a reason for the present party attitude of the writer, that he had discovered the existence (he does not say where, or how, or when) of a design of certain parties, to array the white man against the black man. Hence the earnest desire of the writer to prevent so unholy an alliance; as a remedy, a fusion of all the elements of conservatism and republicanism, was deemed necessary: into which fusion (confusion) the writer, with characteristic modesty, invited all well wishers of the country. In other words, the writer, being governor of Virginia—*by permission*, invites all the white men and colored men—"of all complexions," to congregate under his coat-tail—as the surest harbour in the coming war of races, against which he warns them. This bold and reckless assertion deserves, and shall receive, the stern condemnation, which its sophistry and disingenuousness challenge.

In the letter of Mr. Botts, it is emphatically stated (I use his own words) that—"there is a purpose now half dormant, in the event of the restoration of the Democratic party to power in the State and Federal governments: not only to test the constitutionality of Acts of Congress conferring suffrage upon you, but also to reduce the former slaves to bondage again, upon the ground that it was improperly and unconstitutionally forced upon the Southern States" * * * * "That they have sought and obtained the legal opinion of Mr. Charles O'Connor, a leading Democrat of the State of New York, and a leading lawyer of the New York bar, who fully sustains and justifies them in this view of the question. Need I say more on this subject? *A word to the wise is sufficient.*"

Thus writes Mr. Botts to "the colored people," and asks "need I say more on this subject?" Surely, Mr. Botts might and should have "said more"—then and there. Is it ever justifiable—when one undertakes to *inform and instruct his constituency*—as to his political creed—to *suppress the truth*? I think not. Why did not Mr. Botts, in this communication, report his speech, on this very subject, delivered in Baltimore? Has he revoked, or recalled and suppressed that speech? The "colored people of Culpepper" had better look to it—or they may have one agreeing with Mr. O'Connor, a leading Democrat—in the proposed convention of the State. Why did not Mr. Botts furnish, in this letter, his correspon-

dence with President Abram Lincoln—on the reclamation of Mr. Botts' slaves taken away by the Union Army? Has Mr. Botts altered his opinion as to the Emancipation Proclamation—or the illegality of the seizure and deportation of his slaves under that Proclamation? “Need I say more on this subject?” “*A word to the wise is sufficient.*” So says Mr. Botts, and so say I.

In this same letter Mr. Botts, as usual, rails at the rebellion—at rebels and at secession. Hear him—“That secession was not a blunder simply, but a *crime* to be punished.” Indeed? By whom? Surely not the “colored people?” Will Mr. Botts, or any of his co-conspirators—in the Congress of the United States, or in the State of Virginia—inform the “colored people” as to whom they, above all others, owe their freedom? On this important *historical point*, Mr. Botts, Mr. Sumner, Mr. Stevens, Mr. Kelley—*et id omne genus*, “Tray, Blanche, Sweetheart, ^{little dogs} and all, will preserve a most “conservative and politic silence.” But before I close this letter I will, in my poor way, exhume the whole truth from the “cloud of *false* witnesses” who are perpetually and recklessly misinforming the “colored people.” I will unmask these men—hypocrites? and expose their nefarious policy to the “colored people.”

The language, tone, temper and object of these remarkable productions of Mr. Peirpoint and Mr. Botts, as ill-timed as they were insurrectionary, are but too manifest. The design was to array “the colored people” as a class, against all *white men* who were or had been either Democrats or Secessionists. In plain English, these gentlemen say to “the colored people of Virginia”—“if you do not sustain us and our party, you are engaged in a purpose half dormant, to array the white man against the black man, and are under the “legal opinion of Mr. Charles O'Connor, a leading Democrat of the State of New York, proposing to reduce the former slaves to bondage again.”

Let us scrutinize these bold and reckless assertions. Let us lift the veil which covers the self-complacent visages of these “mighty men in Israel”—these disinterested philanthropists—these “wise men in their day and generation,” and weigh the practical value of the sage premonitions of these *Party Seers*. Let us reason, the one with the other, as men and good citizens, and search out the very truth of the case, in the historical developments of the day, so far, at least, as they tend to illucidate the modern discoveries of these manipulating speculators upon the ignorance and credulity of the “colored people,” while they wave the torch of civil and social discord in the face of the American people. Let us measure their assertions by the developments around us, and view them in the declared purposes, issues and policy of certain parties, already formed on the great national tressel boards. Let us pass behind the scenery and inspect the green room, in which well trained actors are even now rehearsing their respective parts in another great tragedy. This is no period in the onward march of the human race to improvement, in-

creased civilization, enlarged civil and religious rights, and the individual development of man, for any one, any where, or by any means, to arouse the dark passions of the human heart, that fresh deeds of violence may be enacted, to mar the harmony of a hoped for peace. Those who are really well-wishers to the American People, States, and Government, should rather seek to allay than to provoke strife: to quiet and inform the mind. The first duty of every good citizen—north and south—is to compose and soften down, as far as in him lies, the passions of the hour; to appeal to reason, not prejudice.

But when reason and fair dealing are abandoned, and false issues and insurrectionary doctrines are sought to be engrafted on the popular heart—by direct and false appeals to class prejudice and party domination—it is time to speak out—to expose the treason and denounce the rebellious incision on the body politic, by these unanointed hands to destroy both the social and religious compact that binds man to man. Such is my purpose in this letter. If these dangerous issues are to be raised and discussed—let the whole truth be known. This is alike due to the “colored people” and the white—and above all due to the sacred right of suffrage, no matter by whom exercised. I have no appeal to make to “the colored people” as a class. I address myself to the voters of the state. The man who seeks to array one class against the other, merits, and I hope will receive, the stern rebuke and condemnation of both.

In the preceding letter, I alluded to the recent work of one *Hilton R. Helper*, who, in his book has published sentiments, made avowals and developed a *policy* which should mark him as the Intellectual Blackguard and Literary Infidel of the century in which he has written. It is this man of blood—and his “co-operators,” who are, behind the scenes, preparing a doom for “the colored people” far worse than slavery. His *theory* is death—ruin—extermination—utter oblivion to the “black man.” His *policy* is—for all this to be accomplished—by Federal Legislation—executed, if need be, by Federal Bayonets. As Messrs. Peirpoint and Botts have directly raised and pressed this specific issue, with characteristic sophistry, upon the “colored people of Virginia,” I will meet it—and fix the imputed “crime” on its proper authors.

Read the following extracts from Helper’s Book.

DEDICATION.—“To that most Enlightened and Progressive Portion of the People of the New World, who have the Far-reaching Foresight, and the Manly Patriotism, to Determine Irrevocably, by their Votes, in 1868–1872, Sooner or Later, that, after the Fourth of July, 1876, (or, at the very furthest, after the First of January, 1900,) No Slave nor Would-be Slave, No Negro nor Mulatto, No Chinaman nor unnative Indian, No Black nor Bi-colored Individual of whatever Name or Nationality, shall ever again find Domicile anywhere Within the Boundaries of the United States of America. To all those Pre-eminently Sagacious and Good Men who are Deeply Impressed with the Conviction, that even the Firmest Founded and

the Noblest Vindicated of all Republics, whether Ancient or Modern, and the Best System of Government ever yet Devised beneath the Sun, can never Fulfill its Promised Mission of Unexampled Greatness and Grandeur, until After it shall have been Brought under the Exclusive Occupancy and Control of the Heaven-descended and Incomparably Superior White Races of Mankind, This Volume is Most Respectfully Dedicated."

So much for the Dedication. I now furnish a few paragraphs from the Preface.

"Were I to state here, frankly and categorically, that the primary object of this work is to write the negro out of America, and that the secondary object is to write him, (and manifold millions of other black and bi-colored caitiffs, little better than himself,) out of existence, God's simple truth would be told; wherefore, referring the reader to the body of the work itself for my incentives and reasons in the premises, I might now, not without propriety, desist from further prefatory remarks,—but yet I will say something more."

Again: "I speak of negroes, mulattoes, Indians, Chinese, and other obviously inferior races of mankind, whose colors are black or brown,—but never white; and whose mental and moral characteristics are no less impure and revolting than their swarthy complexions." * * * * "Whether in reference to things past, things present, or things to come, (in reference to all things, indeed, except those which appertain immediately and especially to the stomach,) these coal-black and copper-colored caitiffs are, with rare exceptions, as absolutely thoughtless and improvident as the grasshoppers of autumn. Concerning them, however, there is one very consoling and cheerful consideration, and that is, that the appointed period of their tenancy upon the earth will soon be up; and then, like the short-lived ephemera of a summer afternoon, they shall all speedily pass away, and thenceforth and forever be known only, if known at all, in fossil form." See Preface.

On page 62 is following language: "I allude to the presence of so many negroes in our cities and towns—places where not one of them should ever be permitted to reside at all; and if I shall succeed, as I hope and believe I shall, in presenting such a combination of facts and arguments as will demonstrate the propriety of removing them all into the country (if far and forever beyond the limits of the United States, so much the better.) I shall regard it as evidence complete, that these lines have been judiciously penned." See also pages 63 and 64.

On page 65 we find the following: "Negroes are, in truth, so far inferior to white people, that, for many reasons consequent on that inferiority, the two races should never inhabit the same community, city, nor state." See pages 66, 67, 68, 69, 70, 71, 75, 78, 79, 80, 105, 113, 118, 119, 157, 166, 174, 199, 207, 208, 211, 212.

On page 217 will be found the following language: "Yet this (the negro) is the fatuous and filthy fellow whom, by certain degraded and very contemptible white persons, we are advised to

recognize as an equal and as a brother! This is the incorrigible and groveling ignoramus upon whom it is proposed to confer at once the privilege of voting—the right of universal suffrage! This is the loathsome and most execrable wretch (rank-smelling and hideous arch-criminal that he is) who has been mentioned as one fit to have a voice in the enactment of laws for the government of the American people." In this connection read pages 218, 219, 220, 221, 232, 233.

On page 282 will be found the following language: "Depart, therefore, ye wicked and abandoned blacks, into the regions of darkness and deep despair and oblivion prepared for you, and for all akin to you, from the foundation of the world; and let the radiant and gem-like gates of glory, affixed to pillars of gold, be opened wide for the reception of the righteous and heaven-blessed whites, who, while ineffably happy, amidst the diamond-fenced fields of superb fruits and flowers, shall, with constantly increasing joy, bask forever in floods of richly perfumed and silvery-sparkling light."

With this profane, irreverent, God assailing paragraph, I conclude my quotations as to the colored man. I have, I am sure, furnished enough to inspire the disgust and arouse the fiery indignation of every Christian man, white and colored, who does not place party above country—power and dominion above religion and his Maker. The principles enunciated—the policy developed—the blasphemous irreverence of the whole book are a burning shame upon the age in which it is published. And yet this man Helper was, just before the late civil war, hailed by the "slave" as his peculiar friend—was endorsed and recommended by the leaders of the Republican party of the United States—lionised by the "strong-minded women of New England—idolised by those political mountebanks—known and accepted as ministers of the gospel—who sought the blood of brothers, instead of preaching "Christ and him crucified." Where stand they now? Are they for or against the policy of this self-created man-slayer and insolent national partitioner? Where stands Charles Sumner of Massachusetts—the Iago of the United States Senate? Where stands that old man Thad. Stevens, who, with one foot in the grave, is with the other furiously seeking to kick out the "life of the nation," as he grasps, with a miser's clutch, the "vitals of the Constitution," on the utter subversion of which depend his "speculations in the South?" Where stands that host of admirers, who, in 1860, "sang songs of praise and thanksgiving" to this *Monster in Human shape*? Echo answers *where*? * * * * *

Gentle reader, who do you suppose this ineffable "negro hater," above all others in the State of Virginia, selected, appointed and delegated to work out his fiendish policy? Read page 72, and you will find this language: "These are some of them—some of the best—not Black Republicans of low and groveling instincts, but White Republicans of God-like aspirations and purposes." Many names are given from different parts of America: such as

Wm. H. Seward, Edwin M. Stanton; but from *Virginia* you will read in the column the names of JOHN MINOR BOTTS and FRANCIS H. PIERPOINT. "*A word to the wise is sufficient.*"

It would not be proper to dismiss this vile Book without stating another issue presented by its author as a part of the grand American Policy, which he has inaugurated. Examine the tenth chapter, and particularly pages 385-386, and you will discover that, along with the "negro," the "*Catholic*" is doomed to utter extinction. It is not enough to satisfy this "new policy" that the "negro" shall be utterly driven from the face of creation—the *Catholic* must accompany him into the "regions of darkness and deep despair and oblivion prepared for them from the foundation of the world." A war between races is not enough to satisfy the morbid appetite of this world revolutionizing innovator; but there must at the same time, and as a part of the same policy, be inaugurated a war of religions. "*A word to the wise is sufficient.*"

I now return to the letter of Mr. Botts; in considering which I shall deal plainly. It is with the letter and not with Mr. Botts that I am dealing. With him I have nothing to do, nor will I have in the way of newspaper controversy. That is not my mode of dealing with gentlemen, between whom and myself there is a political chasm which no time can fill and no discussion bridge over. While I always hold myself personally responsible to every one who may feel aggrieved by anything which I may say or do, I never seek difficulties or avoid all proper responsibilities.

In this letter is the following language: "That secession is not a blunder simply, but a *crime* to be punished." This is addressed to the "colored people." I ask every reflecting "colored man" was it not the "blunder and crime of secession," which alone, in the providence of God, freed the slave? Does not every informed mind *know* that if there had been no secession there would have been no civil war, and if there had been no civil war, the slaves of 1860 would now be in slavery. Why, then, ask the *freedmen* "to punish the crime?" I was opposed, upon what I regarded as sound principle, to the doctrine of secession; so was Mr. Botts. In this we both opposed the only "blunder" which could have possibly resulted in general emancipation. Then is it not both logical and proper that the freedmen should seek to "punish" us, and not the secessionist? Let this fact sink deep in the mind and heart of the freedmen. It weighs with an eternal import upon their future destiny. There is not a Confederate grave by which the freedmen should pass without humble adoration of an overruling Providence, which caused the "living to die," that the "bondman might be free." There is not a widow or orphan of the "Confederate dead" that the freedman should not tenderly consider, and, as a Christian man, pray for, for the war in which the husband and father fell, was the tocsin which, by the will of God, sounded the death-stroke to slavery. Let then the freedman, in humble and devout thanksgiving to Almighty God, cease to revile the "secessionist," and learn to give the praise to him, and him alone, who decreed

"in the Councils of Heaven" that through the "blunder of secession" his shackles were unloosed. It is profanity, and nothing but profanity to ascribe the emancipation of the slave to the Union army and the Union sentiment." Let this grand truth be perverted by the time-serving demagogue and malignant "Union-shrieker" as it may, no Christian man, in the privacy of his chamber, will dare deny it.

Why, then, this persistent and irreverent effort to arouse personal hatred against the "secessionist?" God rules in Heaven, and "reads aright the human heart." Let the "colored people" then estimate this wicked and clamorous outcry against the "crime of the rebellion" at its proper worth, and strive to "lean on the arm of the Lord of Hosts" as their only safe refuge and sure dependence in the trying position in which they are constantly being placed by such profane miscreants as Hilton R. Helper and his ignoble co-operators. For the freedmen to rail and storm at the "secessionist" is not less out of place than for the Christian to make up his worship by railing at the men who crucified the Saviour. Without the one, there could have been no freedmen; without the other, no salvation. "*A word to the wise is sufficient.*"

I now ask the "colored people" and let the question sink deep in their hearts and abide in their judgments—*Who is it*, Helper and his co-operatives in iniquity and "crime," or "Charles O'Connor, a leading Democrat in the State of New York," who is seeking to array the white man against the black man? *Who is it* that struck the shackles from their limbs, and bid them rise to the dignity of freedmen—the Union-shrieker or the "Secessionist?" *Who is it* that decreed their emancipation—President Lincoln or the Lord of Hosts? *Who is it* that will stand by them when their hour of trial comes, and come it will—the "unconditional Union men," such as Helper and his brother man-slayers, or the whites, among whom they have always lived, and between whom and themselves there is and always must be reciprocal duties and mutual interests? *Who is it* that seeks to mar the opening prospects of a solid peace, such declaimers to their passions as Messrs. Pierpoint and Botts, who seek their patronage, or the writer of this, who has no office, patronage or pardon to ask of any or all men living? *Who is it* that hopes to derive political promotion by catering to the prejudices and pandering to the vanity of the uninformed? Is it not those men who, without the fear of God before their eyes, seek to create dissensions among them? *Who is it* that seeks a proper and constitutional reunion of the States, a fair and just administration of the laws, a full and unrestricted protection to all men under the law? Is it the Union-shrieker who will scandalise the dead and take every oath, however galling, that he may fill offices, or those who have the manhood to speak the truth and spurn office at the expense of conscience?

I make no apology for this letter. The period has arrived, when error must be combatted by reason—when men must speak out; *when those who desire liberty, must seek to deserve it.* It is

now full time to arrest public attention and to direct the public mind to the spurious moral-creed sought to be inculcated in high places—that we must all be Republicans, *or be punished*. What do these men mean, when they bid me to put on and wear a *party badge*, or they will tighten the thumbscrews, and persecute me to the death? Are they Republicans? So is Helper? So is Sumner? So is Botts? So is Peirpoint? If this is the republican creed, and these republican leaders, which I am required to adopt and follow—then I say apply your instruments of torture, for I spurn the party, thus denominated, and would *die* before I would follow in the lead of such men. Do they mean, on the other hand, that I shall join a genuine republican party—that desires peace, and aims at harmony between the blacks and whites—which seeks a thorough and constitutional reunion between the States, and a just and manly administration of the Federal and State governments? If so, then I tell them, once for all, they must turn out, neck and heels, such leaders as I have above named. Put up Gen'l Grant for the Presidency, and if his support is a test of republicanism, I am a republican. Put up Sumner for the Presidency and Botts for the Vice Presidency, and I would spurn the ticket with a loathing that no language can express. As against such a ticket, I would suggest to the “colored people of Culpepper” to nominate Fred. Douglass and Fields Cook, and I am sure they would have, at least, an equal chance for success. Then let me know, before hand, what they mean by “Republican Party.” Let their mass convention, which meets this week, show its hand. Are you—gentlemen—White or Black Republicans, according to Helper’s definition. Are you Confiscation or Anti-Confiscation Republicans? Are you Test Oath or Anti-Test Oath Republicans? Show your hand. Let the wheat be winnowed—and after the chaff is blown away, it will be quite time enough for the real substantial men of the state to decide as to their course.

I am aware of the invidious criticisms to which my first letter has subjected me, and to which this will subject me. Be it so. I have no favors to ask, no responsibilities to shun. Politically, I am enslaved *for the present*. Individually, I am as free as any man on the American continent. I entertain no fears under the threats of proscription, confiscation, professional as well as political disfranchisement. Let them come thick and fast—the thicker and faster the better. Shut me, if it so please the “mighty men of power” at Washington, up in a dungeon, without the light of the sun, but they cannot take from me the light of a clear conscience before man and God. My conscience and mind are God’s precious gifts, and no human power can or shall defile the one, or enslave the other. Give me the grave, with an honored shroud, rather than “life and property,” place and power, with the golden collar of a Spaniel around my neck.

Your fellow-citizen,

JOHN H. GILMER.

Richmond, July 29th, 1867.

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